LIBERTY.

A

POEM.

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ROME:

Being the THIRD PART of

LIBERTY,

A

POEM.

By Mr. THOMSON.

LONDON:

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AS *this* Part *contains a Deſcription of the Eſtabliſhment of* LIBERTY *in* ROME, *it begins with a View of the* Grecian *Colonies ſettled in the Southern Parts of* Italy, *which with* Sicily *conſtituted the* Great Greece *of the Antients. With theſe Colonies the* Spirit *of* LIBERTY, *and of* Republics, *ſpreads over* Italy; *to* Ver. 32. *Tranſition to* PYTHAGORAS *and his Philoſophy, which he taught thro' theſe free States and Cities; to* Ver. 71. *Amidſt the many ſmall* Republics *in* Italy, ROME *the deſtined Seat of* LIBERTY. *Her Eſtabliſhment there dated from the Expulſion of the* Tarquins. *How differing from That in* GREECE; *to* Ver. 88. *Reference to a View of the* ROMAN REPUBLIC *given in the* Firſt Part *of this* Poem: *to mark it's* Riſe *and* Fall *the peculiar Purport of* This. *During it's firſt Ages, the greateſt Force of* LIBERTY, *and* Virtue, *exerted; to* Ver. 103. *The Source whence derived the* Heroic Virtues *of the* ROMANS. *Enumeration of theſe* Virtues. *Thence their Security at Home; their Glory, Succeſs, and Empire, Abroad; to* Ver. 226. *Bounds of the* ~~Roman~~ ~~*Empire*~~ ~~*geographically deſcribed*~~; *to* Ver. 257. *The States of* GREECE *reſtored to* LIBERTY, *by* TITUS QUINTUS FLAMINIUS, *the higheſt Inſtance of Public Generoſity and Beneficence; to* Ver. 328. *The Loſs of* LIBERTY *in* ROME. *It's Cauſes, Progreſs, and Completion in the Death of* BRUTUS; *to* Ver. 485. ROME *under the Emperors; to* Ver. 513. *From* ROME *the* GODDESS *of* LIBERTY *goes among the* NORTHERN NATIONS; *where, by infuſing into them her* Spirit *and general Principles,* SHE *lays the Ground-work of her future Eſtabliſhments; ſends them in Vengeance on the* Roman *Empire, now totally enſlaved; and then, with* Arts *and* Sciences *in her Train, quits Earth during the* dark Ages; *to* Ver. 550. *The Cæleſtial Regions, to which* LIBERTY *retired, not proper to be opened to the View of Mortals.*

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LIBERTY.

PART III.

HERE melting mix'd with Air th' Ideal Forms,
That painted ſtill whate'er the GODDDESS ſung.
Then I, impatient.--"From extinguiſh'd GREECE,
"To what new Region ſtream'd the *Human Day?*"
She ſoftly ſighing, as when *Zephir* leaves,
Reſign'd to *Boreas*, the declining Year,

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Resum'd.---Indignant, these * last Scenes I fled;
And long e'er then, *Leucadia*'s cloudy Cliff,
And the *Ceraunian* Hills behind me thrown,
All LATIUM stood arrous'd. Ages before,
Great Mother of Republicks! GREECE had pour'd,
Swarm after Swarm, her ardent Youth around.
On *Asia*, *Afric*, *Sicily*, they stoop'd,
But chief on fair HESPERIA'S winding Shore;
Where, from † *Lacinium* to *Etrurian* Vales,
They roll'd encreasing Colonies along,
And lent Materials for my ROMAN REIGN.
With them *my Spirit* spread; and numerous States,
And Cities rose, on *Grecian* Models form'd;
As it's Parental Policy, and Arts,
Each had imbib'd. Besides, to Each assign'd

A

* The last Struggles of *Liberty* in GREECE.
† A Promontory in *Calabria*.

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A *Guardian Genius*, o'er the Publick Weal,
Kept an unclosing Eye; try'd to sustain,
Or more sublime the Soul infus'd by ME:
And strong the Battle rose, with various Wave,
Against the *Tyrant Demons* of the Land.
Thus they their little Wars and Triumphs knew;
Their Flows of Fortune, and receding Times,
But almost all below the proud Regard
Of Story vow'd to ROME, on Deeds intent
That *Truth* beyond the Flight of *Fable* bore.
Not so the * SAMIAN SAGE; to him belongs
The brightest Witness of recording Fame.
For these free States his native † Isle forsook,
And a vain Tyrant's transitory Smile,
He sought *Crotona*'s pure salubrious Air,

* PYTHAGORAS.
† *Samos*, over which then reigned the Tyrant POLYCRATES.

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And thro' * *Great Greece* his gentle Wiſdom taught;
Wiſdom that calm'd for † liſtening Years the Mind,
Nor ever heard amid the Storm of Zeal.
His mental Eye firſt launch'd into the Deeps
Of boundleſs Ether; where unnumber'd Orbs,
Myriads on Myriads, thro' the pathleſs Sky
Unerring roll, and wind their ſteady Way.
There he the full conſenting Choir beheld;
There firſt diſcern'd the ſecret Band of Love,
The kind Attraction, that to central Suns
Binds circling Earths, and World with World unites.
Inſtructed thence, he great Ideas form'd
Of the whole-moving, all-informing GOD,
The *Sun* of Beings! beaming unconfin'd
Light,

* The Southern Parts of *Italy*, and *Sicily*, ſo called becauſe of the *Grecian* Colonies there ſettled.

† His Scholars were enjoined Silence for five Years.

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Light, Life, and Love, and ever-active Power:
Whom nought can image, and who beſt approves
The ſilent Worſhip of the moral Heart,
That joys in bounteous Heaven, and ſpreads the Joy.
Nor ſcorn'd the ſoaring Sage to ſtoop to Life,
And bound his Reaſon to the Sphere of Man.
He gave the four yet * reigning Virtues name;
Inſpir'd the Study of the finer Arts,
That civilize Mankind, and Laws devis'd
Where with enlighten'd Juſtice Mercy mix'd.
He even, into his tender Syſtem, took
Whatever ſhares the Brotherhood of Life:
He taught that Life's indiſſoluble Flame,
From Brute to Man, and Man to Brute again,
For ever ſhifting, runs th' Eternal round;

Thence

* The four Cardinal Virtues.

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Thence try'd againſt the blood-polluted Meal,
And Limbs yet quivering with ſome kindred Soul,
To turn the human Heart. Delightful Truth!
Had he beheld the living Chain aſcend,
And not a *circling* Form but *riſing* whole.

Amid theſe ſmall Republicks one aroſe,
On yellow *Tyber*'s Bank, almighty ROME,
Fated for ME. A nobler Spirit warm'd
Her Sons; and, rous'd by Tyrants, nobler ſtill
It burn'd in BRUTUS; the proud *Tarquins* chas'd,
With all their Crimes; bad radiant Æras riſe,
And the long Honours of the *Conſul-Line*.

Here from the fairer, not the greater, Plan
Of GREECE I vary'd; whoſe unmixing States,
By the keen Soul of Emulation pierc'd,

Long

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Long wage'd alone the bloodleſs War of Arts,
And their *beſt* Empire gain'd. But to diffuſe
O'er Men an Empire was my Purpoſe now:
To let my martial Majeſty abroad;
Into the Vortex of one State to draw
The whole mix'd Force, and *Liberty*, on Earth;
To conquer Tyrants, and ſet Nations free.
Already have I given, with flying Touch,
A broken View of this my ampleſt Reign.
Now, while its firſt, laſt, Periods you ſurvey,
Mark how it lab'ring roſe, and rapid fell.
When ROME in Noon-tide Empire graſp'd the World,
And, ſoon as her reſiſtleſs Legions ſhone,
The Nations ſtoop'd around; tho' then appear'd
Her Grandeur moſt, yet in her Dawn of Power,

By

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By many a jealous equal People preſs'd,
Then was the Toil, the mighty Struggle then;
Then for each *Roman* I an *Hero* told;
And every paſſing Sun, and *Latian* Scene,
Saw patriot Virtues then, and awful Deeds,
That or ſurpaſs the Faith of modern Times,
Or, if believ'd, with ſacred Horror ſtrike.

For then, to prove my moſt exalted Power,
I to the Point of full Perfection puſh'd,
To Fondneſs, and enthuſiaſtic Zeal,
The great the reigning Paſſion of the *Free.*
That Godlike Paſſion! which, the bounds of *Self*
Divinely burſting, the whole Public takes
Into the Heart, enlarg'd, and burning high
With the mix'd Ardor of unnumber'd *Selves*;

Of

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Of all who ſafe beneath the *Voted Laws*
Of the ſame parent State, fraternal, live.
From this kind *Sun* of *Moral Nature* flow'd
Virtues, that ſhine the Light of Humankind,
And, ray'd thro' Story, warm remoteſt Time.
Theſe *Virtues* too, reflected to their Source,
Encreas'd it's Flame. The ſocial Charm went round,
The fair Idea, more attractive ſtill,
As more by Virtue mark'd; till *Romans*, all
One Band of Friends, unconquerable grew.

Hence, when their Country rais'd her plaintive Voice,
The Voice of pleading Nature was not heard;
And in their Hearts the Father throb'd no more:
Stern to themſelves, but gentle to the Whole.
Hence ſweeten'd Pain, the Luxury of Toil;

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Patience, that baffle'd Fortune's utmoſt Rage;
High-minded Hope, which at the loweſt Ebb,
When *Brennus* conquer'd, and when *Cannæ* bled,
The braveſt Impulſe felt, and ſcorn'd Deſpair.
Hence Moderation a new Conqueſt gain'd;
As on the vanquiſh'd, like deſcending Heaven,
Their dewy Mercy drop'd, their Bounty beam'd,
And by the labouring Hand were Crowns beſtow'd.
Fruitful of Men, hence hard laborious Life,
Which no Fatigue can quell, no Seaſon pierce.
Hence, INDEPENDANCE, with his *Little* pleas'd
Serene, and Self-ſufficient, like a God;
In whom CORRUPTION could not lodge one Charm,
While he his *honeſt Roots* to *Gold* preferr'd;
While truly rich, and by his *Sabine* Field,

The

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The *Man* maintain'd, the *Roman's* Splendor all
Was in the Public Wealth and Glory plac'd:
Or ready, a rough Swain, to guide the Plough;
Or elſe, the Purple o'er his Shoulder thrown,
In long Majeſtic flow, to rule the State,
With Wiſdom's pureſt Eye; or, clad in Steel,
To drive the ſteady Battle on the Foe.
Hence every Paſſion, even the proudeſt, ſtoop'd,
To Common-Good: CAMILLUS, thy Revenge;
Thy Glory, FABIUS. All ſubmiſſive hence,
Conſuls, *Dictators*, ſtill reſign'd their Rule;
The very Moment that the Laws ordain'd.
Tho' Conqueſt o'er them clap'd her Eagle-wings,
Her Laurels wreath'd, and yoke'd her ſnowy Steeds
To the triumphal Car: ſoon as expir'd

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The lateſt Hour of Sway; taught to ſubmit,
(A harder Leſſon That than to command)
Into the *Private Roman* ſunk the *Chief*.
If ROME was ſerv'd, and Glorious, careleſs they
By whom. Their Country's Fame they deem'd their own;
And above Envy, in a Rival's Train,
Sung the loud *Iös* by themſelves deſerv'd.
Hence matchleſs Courage. On *Cremera*'s Bank,
Hence fell the FABII; hence the DECII dy'd;
And CURTIUS plung'd into the flaming Gulph.
Hence REGULUS the wavering Fathers firm'd,
By dreadful Counſel never given before;
For *Roman* Honour ſue'd, and his own Doom.
Hence he ſuſtain'd to dare a Death prepar'd
By *Punic* Rage. On Earth his manly Look

Re-

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Relentleſs fix'd, he from a laſt Embrace,
By Chains polluted, put his Wife aſide,
His little Children climbing for a Kiſs;
Then dumb thro' Rows of weeping wondering Friends,
A new illuſtrious Exile! preſs'd along:
Nor leſs impatient did he pierce the Crowds
Oppoſing his Return, than if, eſcap'd
From long litigious Suits, he glad forſook
The noiſy Town a while and City Cloud,
To breathe *Venafrian*, or *Tarentine* Air.
Need I theſe high Particulars recount?
The meaneſt Boſom felt a Thirſt for Fame;
Flight their worſt Death, and Shame their only Fear:
Life had no Charms, nor any Terrors Fate,
When ROME and Glory call'd. But, in one View,

Mark

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Mark the rare Boaſt of theſe unequal'd Times.
Ages revolv'd unſully'd by a Crime:
Aſtrea reign'd, and ſcarcely needed Laws,
To bind a Race elated with the Pride
Of Virtue, and diſdaining to deſcend
To Meanneſs, mutual Violence, and Wrongs.
While War around them rag'd, in happy ROME
All peaceful ſmil'd, all ſave the paſſing Clouds
That often hang on *Freedom*'s jealous Brow;
And fair unblemiſh'd Centuries elaps'd,
When not a *Roman* bled but in the Field.
Their Virtue ſuch, that an unballanc'd State,
Still between *Noble* and *Plebeian* toſt,
As flow'd the Wave of fluctuating Power,
By that kept firm, and with triumphant Prow

Rode

Rode out the Storms. Oft tho' the Native Feuds,
That from the firſt their Conſtitution ſhook,
(A latent Ruin, growing as it grew)
Stood on the threatening Point of Civil War
Ready to ruſh: yet could the lenient Voice,
Of Wiſdom, ſoothing the tumultuous Soul,
Theſe Sons of Virtue calm. Their generous Hearts,
Unpetrify'd by *Self*, ſo naked lay
And ſenſible to *Truth*, that o'er the Rage
Of giddy Faction, by Oppreſſion ſwell'd,
Prevail'd a ſimple Fable, and at once
To Peace recover'd the divided State.
But if their often-cheated Hopes refus'd
The ſoothing Touch; ſtill, in the Love of ROME,
The dread *Dictator* found a ſure Reſource.

Was

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Was ſhe aſſaulted? was her Glory ſtain'd?
One common Quarrel wide inflam'd the Whole.
Foes in the *Forum* in the *Field* were Friends,
By ſocial Danger bound; each fond for each,
And for their deareſt Country all, to die.

Thus up the Hill of Empire ſlow they toil'd:
Till the bold Summit gain'd, the thouſand States
Of proud ITALIA blended into One;
Then o'er the Nations they reſiſtleſs ruſh'd,
And touch'd the Limits of the failing World.

Let Fancy's Eye the diſtant Lines unite.
See That which borders wild the Weſtern Main,
Where Storms at large reſound, and Tides immenſe
From *Caledonia*'s dim *Cærulean* Coaſt,
And moiſt *Hibernia*, to where *Atlas*, lodg'd

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Amid the reſtleſs Clouds and leaning Heaven,
Hangs o'er the Deep that borrows thence it's Name.
Mark That oppos'd, where firſt the ſpringing Morn
Her Roſes ſheds, and ſhakes around her Dews:
From the dire Deſarts by the *Caſpian* lav'd,
To where the *Tygris* and *Euphrates*, join'd,
Impetuous tear the *Babylonian* Plain;
And bleſt *Arabia* aromatic breathes.
See That dividing far the watry North,
Parent of Floods! from the majeſtic *Rhine*,
Drunk by *Batavian* Meads, to where, ſeven-mouth'd,
In *Euxine* Waves the flaſhing *Danube* roars;
To where the frozen *Tanais* ſcarcely ſtirs
The dead *Meotic* Pool, or the long * *Rha*,
In the black † *Scythian* Sea his Torrent throws.

* The antient Name of the *Vo'ga*.
† The *Caſpian* Sea.

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Laſt, That beneath the burning Zone behold.
See where it runs, from the deep-loaded Plains
Of *Mauritania* to the *Lybian* Sands,
Where *Ammon* lifts amid the torrid Waſte
A verdant Iſle, with Shade and Fountain freſh;
And farther to the full *Egyptian* Shore,
To where the *Nile* from *Ethiopian* Clouds,
His never-drain'd ethereal Urn, deſcends.
In this vaſt Space what various Tongues, and States!
What bounding Rocks, and Mountains, Floods, and Seas!
What Purple Tyrants quell'd, and Nations free'd!
O'er GREECE deſcended chief, with ſtealth divine,
The *Roman* Bounty in a Flood of Day:
As at her *Iſthmian* Games, a fading Pomp!
Her full-aſſembled Youth innumerous ſwarm'd.

On

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On a Tribunal rais'd FLAMINIUS ſat;
A Victor he, from the deep Phalanx pierc'd
Of iron-coated *Macedon*, and back
The *Grecian* * Tyrant to his Bounds repell'd.
In the high thoughtleſs Gaiety of Game,
While Sport alone their unambitious Hearts
Poſſeſs'd; the ſudden Trumpet, ſounding hoarſe,
Bad Silence o'er the bright Aſſembly reign.
Then thus a Herald.--- "To the States of GREECE
"The ROMAN PEOPLE, unconfin'd, reſtore
"Their Countries, Cities, Liberties, and Laws;
"Taxes remit, and Garriſons withdraw."
The Crowd aſtoniſh'd half, and half inform'd,
Star'd dubious round; ſome queſtion'd, ſome exclaim'd,
(Like one who dreaming, between Hope and Fear,

* The King of *Macedonia*.

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Is loſt in anxious Joy) be that again,
Be that again proclaim'd, diſtinct, and loud.
Loud, and diſtinct, it was again proclaim'd;
And ſtill as Midnight in the Rural Shade,
When the Gale ſlumbers, they the Words devour'd.
A while ſevere Amazement held them mute.
Then, burſting broad, the boundleſs Shout to Heaven
From many a thouſand Heart extatic ſprung.
On every hand rebellow'd to their Joy
The ſwelling Sea, the Rocks, and vocal Hills:
Thro' all her Turrets ſtately * *Corinth* ſhook;
And, from the Void above of ſhatter'd Air,
The flitting Bird fell breathleſs to the ground.
What piercing Bliſs! how keen a Senſe of Fame,
Did then, FLAMINIUS, reach thy inmoſt Soul?

And

* The *Iſthmian* Games were celebrated at *Corinth*.

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And with what deep-felt Glory didſt thou then
Eſcape the Fondneſs of tranſported GREECE?
Mix'd in a Tempeſt of ſuperior Joy,
They left the Sports; like Bacchanals they flew,
Each other ſtraining in a ſtrict Embrace,
Nor ſtrain'd a Slave; and loud Acclaims till Night
Round the *Proconſul*'s Tent repeated rung.
Then, crown'd with Garlands, came the feſtive Hours;
And Muſic, ſparkling Wine, and Converſe warm,
Their Raptures wak'd a-new.-- "Ye Gods! they cry'd,
"Ye guardian Gods of GREECE! And are we free?
"Was it not Madneſs deem'd the very Thought?
"And is it true? How did we purchaſe Chains?
"At what a dire Expence of Kindred Blood?
"And are they now diſſolv'd? And ſcarce one Drop

"For

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" For the fair firſt of Bleſſings have we paid?
" Courage, and Conduct, in the doubtful Field,
" When rages wide the Storm of mingling War,
" Are rare indeed; but how to generous Ends
" To turn Succeſs, and Conqueſt, rarer ſtill:
" That the *Great Gods* and *Romans* only know.
" Lives there on Earth, almoſt to GREECE unknown,
" A People ſo magnanimous, to quit
" Their native Soil, traverſe the ſtormy Deep,
" And by their Blood and Treaſure, ſpent for us,
" Redeem our States, our Liberties, and Laws!
" There does! there does! Oh Saviour TITUS! ROME!"
Thus thro' the happy Night they pour'd their Souls,
And in my laſt reflected Beams rejoic'd.
As when the Shepherd, on the Mountain Brow,

Sits

Sits piping to his Flocks, and gameſome Kids;
Mean time the Sun, beneath the green Earth ſunk,
Slants upward o'er the Scene a parting Gleam:
Short is the Glory that the Mountain gilds,
Plays on the glittering Flocks, and glads the Swain;
To weſtern Worlds irrevocable roll'd,
Rapid, the Source of Light recalls his Ray.
Here interpoſing I.— "Oh QUEEN of Men!
"Beneath whoſe Sceptre in eſſential Rights
"Equal they live; tho' plac'd, for common Good,
"Various, or in Subjection or Command;
"And that by common Choice: alas! the Scene,
"With Virtue, Freedom, and with Glory bright,
"Streams into Blood, and darkens into Woe."
Thus SHE purſue'd.— Near this great Æra, ROME

Began

Began to feel the ſwift Approach of Fate,
That now her Vitals gain'd: ſtill more and more
Her deep Diviſions kindling into Rage,
And War with Chains and Deſolation charg'd.
From an unequal Ballance of her Sons
Theſe fierce Contentions ſprung; and, as encreas'd
This hated Inequality, more fierce
They flam'd to Tumult. INDEPENDANCE fail'd;
Here by *luxurious* Wants, by *real there*;
And with this Virtue every Virtue ſunk:
As, with the ſliding Rock, the Pile ſuſtain'd.
A laſt Attempt, too late, the GRACCHI made,
To fix the flying Scale, and poiſe the State.
On one ſide ſwell'd *Ariſtocratic Pride*;
With *Uſury*, the *Villain!* whoſe fell Gripe

Bends

Bends by Degrees to Baſeneſs the *free* Soul;
And *Luxury* rapacious, cruel, mean,
Mother of Vice! While on the other crept
A *Populace in Want*, with Pleaſure fir'd;
Fit for Proſcriptions, for the darkeſt Deeds,
As the proud *Feeder* bad; inconſtant, blind,
Deſerting Friends at Need, and dupe'd by Foes;
Loud and Seditious, when a Chief inſpir'd
Their headlong Fury, but, of him depriv'd,
Already *Slaves* that lick'd the ſcourging Hand.

This firm *Republic*, that againſt the Blaſt
Of Oppoſition roſe; that (like an Oak
Nurs'd on feracious *Algidum*, whoſe Boughs
Sill ſtronger ſhoot beneath the rigid Axe)
By Loſs, by Slaughter, from the Steel itſelf,

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Even Force and Spirit drew; ſmit with the Calm,
The *dead Serene* of proſperous Fortune, pine'd.
Nought now her weighty Legions could oppoſe;
Her * Terror once, on *Afric*'s tawny Shore,
Now ſmoak'd in Duſt, a Stabling now for Wolves;
And every dreaded Power receiv'd the Yoke.
Beſides, deſtructive, from the conquer'd Eaſt,
In the ſoft Plunder, came that worſt of Plagues,
That Peſtilence of Mind, a feaver'd Thirſt
For the falſe Joys, which *Luxury* prepares.
Unworthy Joys! that waſteful leave behind
No mark of Honour, in reflecting Hour,
No ſecret Ray to glad the conſcious Soul;
At once involving in one Ruin Wealth,
And Wealth-acquiring Powers: while ſtupid *Self*,

Of

* CARTHAGE.

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Of narrow Guſt, and hebetating Senſe
Devour the nobler Faculties of Bliſs.
Hence *Roman Virtue* ſlacken'd into Sloth;
Security relax'd the ſoftening State;
And the broad Eye of Government lay clos'd.
No more the Laws inviolable reign'd,
And Public Weal no more: but Party rage'd;
And partial Power, and Licence unreſtrain'd,
Let *Diſcord* thro' the deathful City looſe.
Firſt, mild * TIBERIUS, on thy ſacred Head
The Fury's Vengeance fell; the Firſt, whoſe Blood
Had ſince the Conſuls ſtain'd contending ROME.
Of Precedent pernicious--- With Thee bled
Three hundred *Romans*; with thy Brother, next,
Three Thouſand more: till, into Battles turn'd

* TIB. GRACCHUS.

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Debates of Peace, and forc'd the trembling Laws,
The *Forum* and *Comitia* horrid grew,
A Scene of barter'd Power, or reeking Gore.
When, half-aſham'd, CORRUPTION'S *Thieviſh Arts*,
And *Ruffian Force* begin to ſap the Mounds
And Majeſty of Laws; if not in Time
Repreſs'd ſevere, for human Aid too ſtrong
The Torrent turns, and overbears the Whole.
Thus *Luxury*, *Diſſenſion*, a mix'd *Rage*
Of boundleſs *Pleaſure* and of boundleſs *Wealth*,
Want wiſhing *Change* and *Waſte* repairing *War*,
Rapine for ever loſt to peaceful Toil,
Guilt unatton'd, profuſe of Blood *Revenge*,
CORRUPTION all-avow'd, and *lawleſs Force*,
Each heightening Each, alternate ſhook the State.

Mean

Mean time *Ambition*, at the dazling Head
Of hardy Legions, with the Laurels heap'd
And Spoil of Nations, in one circling Blaſt
Combin'd the various Storm, and from it's Baſe
The broad REPUBLIC tore. By *Virtue* built
It touch'd the Skies, and ſpread o'er ſhelter'd Earth
An ample Roof: by *Virtue* too ſuſtain'd,
And ballanc'd ſteady, every Tempeſt ſung
Innoxious by, or bad it firmer ſtand.
But when, with ſudden and enormous Change,
The *firſt* of Mankind ſunk into the *laſt*,
As once in *Virtue* ſo in *Vice* extreme,
This univerſal Fabrick yielded looſe,
Before *Ambition* ſtill; and thundering down,
At laſt, beneath it's Ruins cruſh'd a World.

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A conquering People, to themſelves a Prey,
Muſt ever fall; when their victorious Troops,
In Blood and Rapine ſavage grown, can find
No Land to ſack and pillage but their own.
By brutal MARIUS, and keen SYLLA, firſt
Effus'd the Deluge dire of Civil Blood,
Unceaſing Woes began: and This, or That,
(Deep-drenching their Revenge) nor Virtue ſpar'd,
Nor Sex, nor Age, nor Quality, nor Name;
Till ROME, into an human Shambles turn'd,
Made Deſarts lovely.--- Oh to well earn'd Chains
Devoted Race!--- If no true ROMAN then,
No SCÆVOLA there was, to raiſe for ME
A vengeful Hand: was there no Father, robb'd
Of blooming Youth to prop his wither'd Age?

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No Son, a Witneſs to his hoary Sire
In Duſt and Gore defil'd? No Friend, forlorn?
No Wretch, that doubtful trembl'd for himſelf?
None Brave, or Wild, to pierce a Monſter's Heart,
Who, heaping Horror round, no more deſerv'd
The ſacred Shelter of the Laws he ſpurn'd?
No. Sad o'er all profound Dejection ſat;
And nerveleſs Fear. The Slave's Aſylum theirs:
Or Flight, ill-judging, that the timid Back
Turns weak to Slaughter; or partaken Guilt.
In vain from SYLLA's Vanity I drew
An unexample'd Deed. The Power reſign'd,
And all unhop'd the Commonwealth reſtor'd,
Amaz'd the Public, and effac'd his Crimes.
Thro' Streets yet ſtreaming from his murderous Hand

Un-

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Unarm'd he ſtray'd, unguarded, unaſſail'd
And on the Bed of Peace his Aſhes laid;
A Grace, which I to his Demiſſion gave.
But with him dy'd not the deſpotic Soul.
Ambition ſaw that ſtooping ROME could bear
A MASTER, *nor had Virtue to be free.*
Hence for ſucceeding Years my troubled Reign
No certain Peace, no ſpreading Proſpect knew.
Deſtruction gather'd round. Still the black Soul,
Or of a CATILINE, or * RULLUS, ſwell'd
With fell Deſigns: and all the watchful Art
Of CICERO demanded, all the Force,
All the State-wielding Magic of his Tongue;

And

* PUB. SERVILIUS RULLUS, Tribune of the People, propoſed an *Agrarian Law*, in Appearance very advantageous for the *People*, but deſtructive of their Liberty; and which was defeated by the Eloquence of CICERO, in his Speech againſt RULLUS.

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And all the Thunder of my CATO's Zeal.
With theſe I linger'd; till the Flame anew
Burſt out in Blaze immenſe, and wrap'd the World.
The ſhameful Conteſt ſprung; to whom Mankind
Should yield the Neck: to POMPEY, who conceal'd
A Rage impatient of an equal Name;
Or to the nobler CÆSAR, on whoſe Brow
O'er daring Vice deluding Virtue ſmil'd,
And who no leſs a vain Superior ſcorn'd,
Both bled, but bled in vain. New Traitors roſe.
The Venal WILL *be bought, the Baſe have Lords.*
To theſe vile Wars I left ambitious Slaves;
And from *Philippi*'s Field, from where in Duſt
The laſt of *Romans*, matchleſs BRUTUS! lay,
Spread to the North untam'd a rapid Wing.

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What tho' the first smooth CÆSAR's Arts careſs'd,
Merit, and Virtue, ſimulating ME!
Severely tender! cruelly humane!
The Chain to clinch, and make it ſofter ſit
On the new-broken ſtill ferocious State.
From the dark * *Third*, ſucceeding, I beheld
Th' Imperial Monſters all — A Race on Earth
Vindictive ſent, the Scourge of Humankind!
Whoſe blind Profuſion drain'd a Bankrupt World;
Whoſe Luſt to forming Nature ſeems Diſgrace;
And whoſe Infernal Rage had every Drop
Of antient Blood, that yet retain'd my Flame,
To that of † PÆTUS, in the peaceful Bath,

Or

* TIBERIUS.

† THRASEA PÆTUS, put to Death by *Nero*. TACITUS introduces the Account he gives of his Death thus. — "After having inhumanly ſlaughter'd ſo many

Or ROME's affrighted Streets inglorious flow.
But almoſt juſt the meanly-patient Death,
That waits a Tyrant's unprevented Stroke.
TITUS indeed gave one ſhort Evening Gleam;
More cordial felt, as in the midſt it ſpread
Of Storm, and Horror. The Delight of Men!
He who the Day, when his o'erflowing Hand
Had made no happy Heart, concluded loſt,
TRAJAN and HE, with the MILD * SIRE and SON,
His Son of Virtue! eas'd awhile Mankind;
And *Arts* reviv'd beneath their gentle Beam.
Then was their laſt Effort: what *Sculpture* rais'd

"many illuſtrious Men, he (*Nero*) burned at laſt with a Deſire of cutting off "Virtue itſelf in the Perſon of THRASEA, *&c.*"

* ANTONINUS PIUS, and his adopted Son MARCUS AURELIUS, afterwards called ANTONINUS PHILOSOPHUS.

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To TRAJAN's Glory, following Triumphs ſtole;
And mix'd with *Gothic* Forms, (the Chiſſel's Shame)
On that Triumphal * Arch, the Forms of GREECE.

Mean time o'er rocky *Thrace*, and the deep Vales
Of gelid *Hæmus*, I purſu'd my Flight;
And, piercing fartheſt *Scythia*, weſtward ſwept
† *Sarmatia*, travers'd by a thouſand Streams.
A ſullen Land of Lakes, and Fens immenſe,
Of Rocks, reſounding Torrents, gloomy Heaths,
And cruel Deſarts black with ſounding Pine;
Where Nature frowns: tho' ſometimes into Smiles
She ſoftens; and immediate, at the Touch
Of ſouthern Gales, throws from the ſudden Glebe

Luxu-

* CONSTANTINE's Arch, to build which, That of TRAJAN was deſtroy'd, Sculpture having been then almoſt intirely loſt.

† The antient *Sarmatia* contain'd a vaſt Tract of Country running all along the North of *Europe*, and *Aſia*.

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Luxuriant Paſture, and a Waſte of Flowers.

But, Cold-compreſt, when the whole loaded Heaven
Deſcends in Snow, loſt in one white Abrupt,
Lies undiſtinguiſh'd Earth; and, ſeiz'd by Froſt,
Lakes, headlong Streams, and Floods, and Oceans ſleep.
Yet there Life glows; the furry Millions there
Deep-dig their Dens beneath the ſheltering Snows:
And there a Race of Men prolific ſwarms,
To various Pain, to little Pleaſure us'd;
On whom, keen-parching, beat *Riphæan* Winds;
Hard like their Soil, and like their Climate fierce;
The Nurſery of Nations!—— Theſe I rous'd,
Drove Land on Land, on People People pour'd;
Till from almoſt perpetual Night they broke,
As if in Search of Day; and o'er the Banks

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Of yielding Empire, only Slave-ſuſtain'd,
Reſiſtleſs rage'd, in Vengeance urg'd by Me.
Long in the barbarous Heart the bury'd Seeds
Of *Freedom* lay, for many a wintry Age;
And tho' my Spirit work'd, by ſlow Degrees,
Nought but it's Pride and Fierceneſs yet appear'd.
Then was the Night of Life, that parted Worlds.
I quitted Earth the while. As when the Tribes
Aerial, warn'd of riſing Winter, ride
Autumnal Winds, to warmer Climates borne;
So, *Arts* and each *good Genius* in my Train,
I cut the cloſing Gloom, and ſoar'd to Heaven.
In the bright Regions there of pureſt Day,
Far other Scenes, and Palaces, ariſe,
Adorn'd profuſe with other Arts divine.

All

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All Beauty here below, to them compar'd,
Would, like a Roſe before the mid-day Sun,
Shrink up it's Bloſſom; like a Bubble break
The paſſing poor Magnificence of Kings.
For there the KING OF NATURE, in full Blaze,
Calls every Splendor forth; and there his Court
Amid Etherial Powers, and Virtues, holds:
Angel, Archangel, tutelary Gods,
Of Cities, Nations, Empires, and of Worlds.
But Sacred be the Veil, that kindly clouds
A Light too keen for Mortals; wraps a View
Too ſoftening Fair, for Thoſe that here in Duſt
Muſt chearful toil out their appointed Years.
A Senſe of higher Life would only damp
The School-Boy's Task, and ſpoil his playful Hours.

Nor

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Nor could the Child of Reason, feeble Man,
With Vigour thro' this Infant Being drudge;
Did brighter Worlds, their unimagin'd Bliss
Diſcloſing, dazle and diſſolve his Mind.